

DISCOVERIES AND CAUTIONS

FROM

The Streets of Zion.

BY A WATCHMAN OF THE NIGHT.

IN

A S E R M O N,

DELIVERED AT

PROVIDENCE CHAPEL,

OCTOBER 22, 1798.

By WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S.S.

LATE

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL,
GRAY'S INN LANE.

Go, set a watchman; let him declare what he seeth. I am
set in my ward whole nights.—ISA. XLII. 6, 8.

FOURTH EDITION.

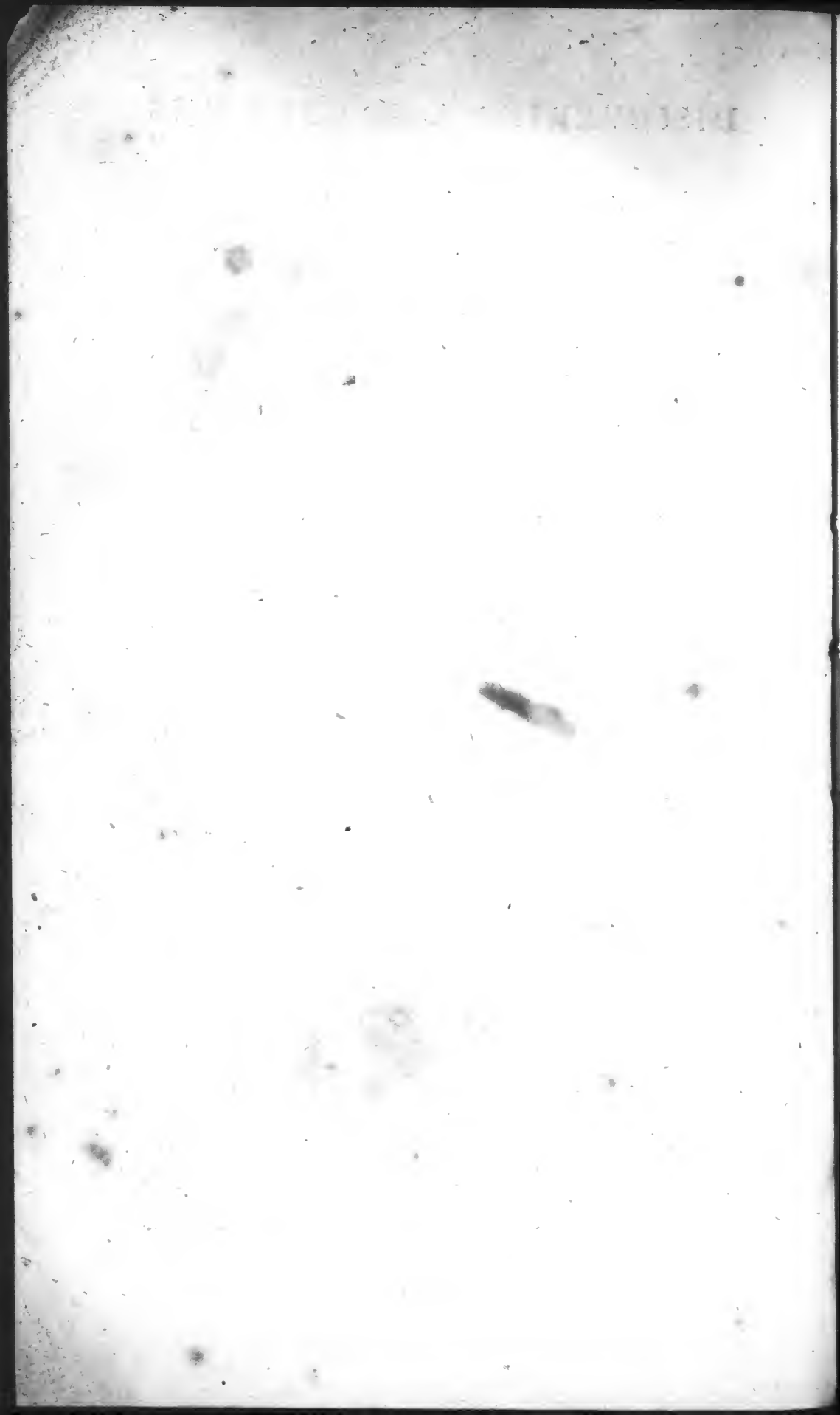
LONDON:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY T. BENSLEY,
Bolt Court, Fleet Street;

Sold also by T. HAMILTON, 33, Paternoster Row;

At Providence Chapel, Gray's Inn Lane; Jireh Chapel, Lewes, Sussex; Salem Chapel, Leicester; by T. Barston, Market Place, Grantham, Lincolnshire; J. Jameson, Penrith, Cumberland; S. Turner, Sunderland; and at Providence Chapel, Cranbrook, Kent.

1814.



To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

DEAR SIR,

THE request we are going to make, we trust, is under an impression from Him who has left it on record, that when he was upon earth, he prayed to his heavenly Father, not for his disciples then with him alone, but for those also who should in future believe on him through their word; taking into his view, and expressing the love of his heart for, all that his Father had giving to him, which were afterwards to appear in the world, down to the last hoof, which is not to be left behind, or the last stone that shall be laid in the building of mercy. We have heard the word this night from your mouth, not as the word of the man who delivered it, but as of God, who, we are well convinced, gave it to you. And, as we know it concerns not us only, but the elect of God at large, and the rising generation that are to succeed us, we wish it to be spread in the present day, and handed down to those whom it may concern when time with us is no more. With this view, having reason to bless our gracious

God for condescending so eminently to enlighten, teach, and instruct you, so as to cause you to go not only before us, but before any we have heard or known of, either in the present day or for ages past, we wish you to be at the trouble to write down, as nearly as you can, the Sermon this evening delivered, and to permit us four to be at the expense of printing and publishing the same; in doing which we believe you will not only oblige and serve us, but thousands besides in the present day, and also unknown numbers of God's children yet unborn. Remembering that light is sown for the righteous, let us not spare some pains and expense to communicate and hand down to others a little of what it pleases God to shew you. We remain,

DEAR SIR,

Affectionately yours,

Monday Evening,
22d October, 1798.

V. L.
M. C.
E. T.
O. T.

A S E R M O N.

Rev. iii. 5.

‘He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life; but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.’

THE church of Sardis certainly was a type or figure of the church of God in the present day; which appears from the next mentioned church, called that of Philadelphia, having an open door set before the angel of it, which no man can shut, and which shews the universal spread of the gospel, till the earth be filled with the knowledge and glory of God as the waters cover the sea; and when that glorious time shall be over, the last church of the seven will appear, and which will end with the world; for what is said to that church exactly agrees with the account of the wise and foolish virgins in Matt. xxv. when the bridegroom will come, and find professors slumbering and sleeping, which is there called, lukewarm in their souls; when he will shut the door, and

spew all careless and lifeless professors out of his mouth, they having no abiding place in the bowels of his mercy. Hence he tells the last church of the seven, that he stands at the door and knocks; and, in his account of the last days, he blesses that servant who, when he cometh and knocketh, shall open to him immediately. Moreover when he writes to the Laodiceans he stiles himself the Amen, to shew that he then comes to give the finishing stroke both to the church and to the word. Hence it appears that these seven churches were typical, which seems to be the reason why these seven churches in Asia are written to, and no others; no, not so much as the church at Jerusalem, which was the metropolitan church, and the mother of all the rest; and which in all things had the pre-eminence, by being the mother of Christ, for he was born there, and of her, according to the flesh; and it was she that first trusted in him, and from whom the word and the law came forth to all nations: and yet even she is not named in these epistles, though no doubt but she is included in one of the types; no, nor any church in Africa, nor any in Europe; which shews plainly that they were types of churches which should afterwards appear in the world. And, as Philadelphia prefigures the next glorious appearing of the church, and the universal spread of the gospel in the world, and that of Laodicea agrees with the Lord's account of his coming to judgment, so the church of Sardis represents the church in our day; and every thing that is

said to this church exactly agrees with it in its present state.

. In addressing this church Christ stiles himself "he that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars." By the seven spirits of God angels are not meant; for it can hardly be thought that angels are joined with God the Father, and with the Lord Jesus Christ, in sending these epistles to the churches, as in chap. i. ver. 4, 5; but the Holy Ghost, with all the fulness of his gifts and graces, is meant; and by the seven stars the seven ministers of the churches, which, like stars, have a little light in them, and which is reflected from Christ; and their being in Christ's hand shews their weakness, and the need of his power to support, protect, and keep them.

"I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." The works that Christ requires are the works of faith, the labours of love, and the patience of hope, performed in his strength, by persons interested in him, and who abide in him, who enforce and defend his truth, who embrace it, hold it fast, and abide by it. All works short of these are dead works, performed by persons dead in trespasses and sins, and under the curse of the law, and the sentence of their own conscience; and, what is most dreadful of all, they are damned by the gospel; it is a savour of death unto death to them, being only hypocrites in Zion.

"Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." There is nothing more common in the present day

than to hear a poor canting hypocrite crying out, O! what a lively minister that young man is! What a lively congregation such an one hath! That and this young man, how lively they are! they are alive to God indeed! When, at the same time, if you ask ninety-nine out of a hundred, either ministers or people, what the quickening operations of the Holy Spirit are; what the application of the word of life is when sent with power; what it is to pass from death to life by faith; what it is to be delivered from the sting of death, the fear of death, and from the law, which is the ministration of death; and what a lively hope is, what repentance unto life means, and what the circumcision of the heart to love God with all the heart, that we may live, means; or what it is to have Christ living in us; they will give you just as good an account of these things as a Hottentot, and no better: "they have a name to live, but they are dead." And those who give them this name to live are such as only judge according to appearance, and not righteous judgment. Nor does their appearance of life spring from divine things, but from human inventions, such as the missionary business. This kept many of the flying troops and scouting parties for a long time in life and motion: novelty gives life to many thousands. Such a precious soul is coming up, and preaches his first sermon at lo here; such an one takes his leave at lo there; but divine life is neither enforced nor described by one in fifty of them; for, if life were insisted on, they would be

badly attended by those who have only a name to live.

Many ministers are obliged to have recourse to an organ before a little false glee can be raised; others study the art of moving the passions by empty oratory, and a great noise; others are kept in life and motion by abusing the civil powers, and crying up the majesty of the jacobins; and not a few thousands are fed, and kept in life and motion by those who blacken the gospel, by charging it with the opprobrious names of antinomianism and licentious doctrine, and by ridiculing the power of godliness, and those who preach it, and those who enjoy it. The name to live springs from these things, and not from the Holy Ghost's operations.

“Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain that are ready to die.” The first of these words contain a reproof for blindness of mind, carnal security, idleness, and inattention. And blind they must be, with a witness; for, when the hour of temptation came on, they expected no less than the destruction of all rule, government, order, and distinction, among men, and that anarchy was to ride in triumph; whereas God sent it as a fan to separate the vile from the precious, and as a trap to discover and take by the heel the impostors and hypocrites in Zion; and they are so desperate at the success that God gives to our forces, that it is a vexation only to understand the report, and will terminate as the prophet foretold it would, namely, that

“they shall fret themselves, and curse both their king and their God, and look upward.”

“Strengthen the things which remain that are ready to die.” These things are the vessels of mercy in the furnace of affliction, half starved for want of the bread and water of life, and nothing to attend but wells without water, clouds without rain, and shepherds that cannot understand; they want their state described, and the kind invitations and encouragements of the gospel spoken experimentally to them; and they go from city to city to find it, but all in vain. And there is scarce a large town in the nation, but what you will find here and there a little company sensible of their lost state, labouring in bondage and misery, but none to feed them; hypocrites are fed and nourished up in their presumption, and such as these are quite starved. These are called

“The things which remain;” which implies that great numbers are fallen off; and this is most certainly true with respect to our day of profession. Mr. Winchester, who laid a foundation for hope in hell, overthrew the faith of many, both of them that stood in the pulpit, as well as those in the pew. Mr. Brothers, the lunatic, who promised a basis for hope in the Saviour’s sepulchre, and that we should once more seek the living among the dead, hath slain his thousands; but Tom Paine has slain his ten thousands; and there is not one in a hundred of them that remain that Christ takes any notice of; it is only the few things which are ready to die (not

them that have a name to live while they are dead) that he cares for; “for he is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” His complaint is,

“I have not found thy works perfect before God.”

The perfect work of a gospel minister is doing the work of an evangelist, or the work of a minister of the Spirit; and he that doth it must be one that is born again, and interested in the love, favour, and finished salvation of Christ, and in union with him, who shines in his light, stands in his strength, burns in his love, and enjoys life, righteousness, peace, and rest, in him; and so spreads the truth of his word, the power of his hand, the savour of his name, the mysteries of his kingdom, and the benefits of his cross; and by enforcing these things influences others, by the good hand of God upon him, who promises to give testimony to the word of his grace, and to no other doctrine: this is a divine work, and therefore called a good work, and perfect work, because it brings souls to believe in Jesus, to love him, and to worship God in spirit and in truth, to glorify him, and to ascribe the glory of their salvation to him. But the works here complained of are of another sort; time-serving, walking in craftiness, and handling the word of God deceitfully; which is legalizing and carnalizing them, beginning in the spirit and ending in the flesh, confessing truth, and publishing it at the beginning of their profession, and then departing from it, and condemning it; swearing allegiance to the king, and then preaching against

him; subscribing the Articles of the Church, then lampooning them and all that maintain them. These are the works of the present day.

“Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast and repent.” How the church received, and what she at first heard, may be seen in the above mentioned articles, predestination and election, redemption by the blood of Christ, pardon and peace by his sacrifice, and justification by faith in Christ’s righteousness; as may be seen in Luther’s works, in Calvin’s, and in the Church Articles; these are the things which used to be heard and received. But can we say that these are held fast in our days? No; so far from it, that the generality of professors wage war with every one that preaches them and the experience of them, and with every one that professes them and abides by them. The Lord’s exhortation to us is, to “hold fast,

And repent,” for the generality of professors are without repentance, and altogether ignorant of it, and so are the generality of preachers; they think it consists of a little natural sorrow, springing from self-love, a sense of guilt, and fear of future punishment; but this is the repentance of Judas when the devil entered into him; whereas true repentance follows upon the devil’s departure out of the sinner. True repentance is not pressed, squeezed, nor extorted, by the workings and violent struggles of guilt and wrath, fear and torment; but it flows out under the sin-pardoning operations of the Spirit of love, accompanied

with the blood of atonement, attended with a believing view of Christ and of interest in him, and of God's appearing reconciled and well-pleased in Jesus, shining upon us in his blessed face, accepting us in the beloved, and blessing us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in him: this is repentance unto life, and is the gift of God. In the next words our Lord calls for watchfulness.

"If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief." No doubt but this is spoken to our watchmen in Zion, the generality of whom are stone blind; who are so far from going about the city, that they do not know the way into it (Eccl. x. 15); and, instead of standing on Zion's walls, which are salvation, they are for the most part dead in trespasses and sins. A watchman is to give the time of the night, to sound an alarm in times of danger, to take up thieves and loose persons, and to observe the motions and approaches of invaders, and to give timely notice to the citizens, that they may be upon their guard: this is God's account of a watchman; but who comes up to the character? Most of our watchmen indeed are boasting of our great light, and the wonderful spread of the gospel, when I think that we are sinking into one of the darkest nights that ever came upon gospel Zion; and, so far from the gospel being universally spread, even in this country, I do not believe that one sermon in a thousand that is preached among us bears the least resemblance of it, if Paul's description of the gospel be a true one. He tells us that "the

gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; [that it is] the ministration of life and of righteousness;" and that a real minister of it is a minister of the Spirit. And, if this be true, where shall we find such gospel and such ministers? Nor can we say that our watchmen have apprehended or taken into custody any thieves or robbers, but rather consented with them. I know of no worse thieves and robbers than Papists, Arminians, Arians, and Socinians, for they rob God; but many of our blind watchmen have wished God speed even to the French, and said 'A confederacy,' to all the other dens of thieves; and, instead of barking or giving tongue at the devil when he came down among us, the most of them were dumb dogs, and rather fawned upon him than otherwise. If therefore thou shalt not watch,

"I will come on thee as a thief." The thief generally comes when people are most secure, and when he is least expected: and sure I am that Christ fulfilled his word in this hour of temptation; for he stripped many wolves of their sheep-skins, and made them go naked, that others might see their shame; he stripped many of their hearts of all their inward decorations, sweepings, and garnishings, and let Satan return again to his house whence he came out. And this was visible by the rebellion, revenge, blood, and slaughter, they breathed forth; so that their hearts might truly be called the dragons' dens, and their mouths the holes of the asps. Some the

Lord bereaved of their houses and goods, of their preferments, families, and friends, and even of their own native country, by transporting them to strange lands, as unworthy to remain in their own; others he cooped up in prisons, depriving them of the common liberty of strollers and fortune-tellers; and some he sent out of the world by a halter, as unworthy of life; and great numbers which remain among us have had their one talent taken from them; many, who had some sound notions of the gospel, and some good views, and who were capable of sound speech which could not be condemned, were given up to the devil and Tom Paine, that they even sucked in the rebellion, blasphemy, and carnal logic, of that man, till they could not produce one argument but what was point blank against the will and word of God: these were too wise to be ruled and governed by that, and their wisdom hath perverted them. Others, who had not much in hand but a deal in hope, have been stripped also; I mean those who have been long predicting and expecting the ruin and destruction of all the civil rulers in Europe; promising themselves from week to week French liberty by the sword of France, and by the destruction of their own country; these have hoped in Buonaparte and the Irish Papists, and have cried up the majesty of the people, by which they meant none but themselves; these our Lord has deposed from their imaginary thrones, and from all the princely dignity that they have fancied, and demolished all their hopes by sending the Irish murderers

out of the world, the French fleets into our harbours, and the blasphemous Rabshakehs into the land of Ham instead of Jerusalem, giving Egypt for our ransom. Thus has our dear Lord come as a thief, and unmasked the impostors and hypocrites in Zion, and hung them up as polluted with perjury, rebellion, and blood, to contempt before all the righteous in both worlds.

“And thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.” This hour of our Lord’s coming was to be a profound secret till he was pleased to make it known; and a secret it hath been, and hid in God; for no one commentator hath ever described it, or hit the mark about it; which shews that prophecies are best understood by the fulfilment of them. And, when this hour of temptation did come, we were all at a loss to know where the prediction of it stood in scripture, and what it would terminate in, and those who seemed to be the wisest about it were the farthest from it. It exercised my mind not a little for nearly five years, till the Lord told me upon my bed, by a voice from heaven, that “this is the hour of temptation;” and I knew the voice, and who it was that spoke it; and an hour of temptation it hath been with a witness. Many thousands hath the devil tempted to dig pits and set traps and snares for the lives of others, who, by the justice of God, Haman like, have fallen into them themselves. Not a snare has been set by Satan or his agents, not a vile plan hath been laid either on the continent, in our own country, or on board the fleets, but what our God has discovered and marred, and

thrown most of the contrivers headlong into their own inventions: so let thine enemies perish, O Lord; but them that love thee be as the sun when he goeth forth in his strength, and let our land have rest forty years.

This hour of temptation hath exercised and tried the hearts of many of the children of God, whether they would be led away with the error of the wicked, or fall from their own stedfastness, and follow a multitude to do evil or not. Many impostors in the pulpits and hypocrites in the pews have tried them not a little, besides the sly and private pimps and lacquies of the devil, who daily went their rounds with Tom Paine's books, inflammatory pamphlets, jacobinical newspapers, and lunatic prophecies. By these tempters, and their temptations, God hath tried his people, that their faith and obedience might be seen; when once God's judgments should return unto righteousness, that the upright in heart might follow that. Some were not a little staggered in their confidence, and for awhile halted about a confederacy: but God healed them that halted; nor will he suffer them that are of a broken and contrite heart, and who walk humbly with him, to be finally deceived; their falls into troubles, their trials and temptations, shall be sanctified to purify them and to make them white: and so it is; for, when God makes manifest the hearts of the contrary part, these stand the stronger, shine the brighter, see the better, and appear the more plain by having God's will, word

providence, and grace, on their side, and by their having the mind of Christ, and by God's hearing and answering their prayers ; when the prophecies, desires, wishes, prayers, hopes, and expectations of the hypocrite, all perish together. This has been the case in our day ; and so it follows,

“ Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments ; and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.” This is spoken by way of wonder and astonishment, that in our days there should be any of this number left, when so many thousands both of ministers and people were carried away in this hour of temptation : but so it is ; there are a few names left ; for when the lion and the bear go through the whole flock, “ the shepherd will recover a leg and a piece of an ear.” Amos. iii. 12.

Now these choice ones are called names, not persons, in which (I think) the mystery is couched. These names cannot mean the name Evangelist ; for those who have stiled themselves the Evangelical Association are, for the most part, either in the trap of Tom Paine or that of John Wesley. These names may be considered as names which impostors, wolves, and hypocrites, may give them on account of their steadiness, staunch adherence to truth, and singularity, just as the first saints and faithful followers of Christ were called Nazarenes, Acts xxiv. 5 ; especially as it is well known that many who are called Antinomians, dangerous men, men of a bad spirit,

bigots, narrow souls, and even 'spiritual blackguards' by some men, whom the devil himself, nor all his agents, cannot defile, expose or degrade, by all the wiles that are used in this hour of temptation, any more than he could stain the reputation of Paul by calling him a mover of sedition, and his doctrine heresies. But, if these names are sacred names, as is most likely, I mean such as God gives to his people, then we can soon come to a point about them, as our God is so particular in pointing them out, and even what names are to be laid aside, and what are to be adopted; for instance, "Thou shalt no more be called Forsaken, neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah; for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married." The usual name of the Gentiles, by which the Jews called them, was that of forsaken, in opposition to themselves; and their land desolate, in opposition to the holy land which God had chosen to dwell in: on which account Canaan and its Jewish inhabitants were called a fruitful field, and the Gentile world a wilderness. But God promised to make a change in the world, and that was, "that he would turn the wilderness into a fruitful field, and the former fruitful field should be accounted for a forest:" and this was done when the kingdom was taken from the Jews and given to a people that should bring forth the fruit thereof; from which time the Gentiles, on account of the elect among them, were

not to be called forsaken, nor was their land (as God would dwell in it) to be any more called "desolate. But thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah; for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married." The name Hephzibah is applicable to all in whom God delights; and we are told that the prayer of the upright is his delight; and another scripture says, "the upright love thee;" then the name Hephzibah is peculiar to them that love the Lord and call upon his name; and Beulah is applicable to that land in which the upright dwell; for the whole country is espoused for the sake of the Lord's Hephzibah, even as all the children of Israel were called God's sons by national adoption for the sake of the few that were his by faith and regeneration, and they were even called his wife for the sake of the few that were espoused to him;

Hence it appears that Hephzibah is the upright that love God and pray unto him, and Beulah the country which is the seat of the church which is espoused to him: and hard work has the devil had, and all that have laboured in conjunction with him, to defile this our Zion, and to make our land a field of blood. But we are just where we were; and they who have watched for our halting and for our destruction are left in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity, for God hath appeared to our glory, but to their shame.

Another of the names by which Gentile Zion is to be called, is this, "Let not the eunuch say, Behold,

I am a dry tree; for thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things which please me, even to them will I give in my house, and within my walls, a place and a name, better than of sons and of daughters. I will give them an everlasting name which shall not be cut off." This name which is to be given, and which is to be better than that of sons and daughters, is said to be written upon them, Rev. iii. 12. Faith is a law written on the mind; and our sonship is manifested to us by faith. This name appears to be that of adoption, or the name son of God, which is much better than that of being a father to sons and daughters, and is an everlasting one, and never shall be cut off; for Christ will bring these many sons to glory; therefore it will be acknowledged, even in heaven; nor can it be cut off, seeing the promise is sure to all the seed; which seed are not to be cut off with a shilling, nor the entailment of their inheritance to be cut off; for Christ's throne shall endure for ever, and his seed as the sun before him. The other names which they are to go by are these: "One shall say I am the Lord's, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel." He that is to say I am the Lord's, is one to whom the atonement is applied, who says "I am not my own, I am bought with a price." He that is to call himself by the name of Jacob, is one that hath run away with the birth-right, or one that is born again, and who has got

the blessing of eternal life in his heart. And is not such an one rightly called Jacob? And he that surnames himself by the name of Israel, must be one that hath prevailed at a throne of grace, and got an answer to his prayers, for this name cannot be applicable to any other. Another name which is given to the saints, and which is a new one, and peculiar to the New Testament, is that of a Christian; and it is a very sacred name, and is taken from Christ himself, and signifies anointed, and belongs to none but those which have received an unction from the Holy One. “Now he which hath called us, and anointed us [saith Paul] is God, who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit;” but, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, and of course no real Christian, for he hath nothing of Christ in him. Now, our dear Lord, because he would not discourage us too much, and sink us too low, or add grief to our sorrow, tells us that there are a few even among us who bear these names, and to whom they are applicable; and sure I am that, “if the Lord had not left us this very small remnant, we had been as Sodom, and made like unto Gomorrah.” But these are the salt of the earth. These few names

“Have not defiled their garments.” These garments cannot mean the righteousness of Christ, which is called the wedding garment, the garment of praise, and the garment of salvation. It is called a wedding garment, because Christ accepts us in it as soon as the Father imputes it to us; a garment of praise it is called, because we cannot bless God and

praise him with joyful lips till he hath justified us by faith in it ; and it is called a garment of salvation, because he shall never be cursed nor damned that wears it. It is God that justifies, who can condemn ? and it is a truth that whom God justifies, them he glorifies. Nor does this garment appear to be the garment of humility ; for a man that truly wears that has a conscience too sore, and a heart too tender, to wallow in pollution. I confess I am rather in the dark about these garments ; but I tell you all that I know ; can you expect more ?

Job says, “ I put on righteousness, and it clothed me ; my judgment was a robe and a diadem.” Job xxix. 14. The good man is not here speaking of the righteousness of the Redeemer, for we cannot put that on of ourselves, no, nor yet pull it off when it is on. It is God’s work to put this on. “ The Lord, [says Zion,] hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.” Is. lxi. 10. Job is speaking of himself as a civil magistrate, and of his faithfulness and uprightness in his office, and therefore he must mean civil righteousness, or equity, or righteousness between man and man, so as to acquit himself at the bar of his own conscience, as he himself confesses : “ My heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.” Job xxvii. 6. This in the Old Testament is called “ walking with God in peace and equity ;” and in the New Testament it is called “ keeping a conscience void of offence ;” and blessed

is the man that condemns not himself in the thing which he allows. This was Job's garment, and he did not defile it ; however we read of some who have defiled it, and it hath been washed again.

Job tells us that his "judgment was as a robe and a diadem." If so, it was pure from gross errors, or damnable heresies, both in the court of justice and in the court of conscience. We read of false doctrines and corrupt principles both in civil and in religious persons, whose mind and conscience are both defiled; these garments should be kept clean.

We read also of "wolves in sheep's clothing," which means hypocrites ; and a hypocrite is a graceless sinner, in the external garb of a saint. Now, if a wolf can appear in a sheep's skin, in order to deceive the sheep, a real sheep must have a skin which of right belongs to him, and which I take to be the whole of a saint's profession, his life, walk, and conversation, in this world, after he is converted, or after he is saved by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost ; and hence we read of the teeth of a flock of sheep (which I take to be ministers and their helpers) being shorn, and coming up from the washing each bearing twins, and not one barren among them.

Again, we are exhorted to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and to walk in him." A congregation thus adorned is a woman clothed with the sun indeed, and has the moon under her feet. However, there are not a few that put him on in shew, as Alexander and

others have done, and who have greatly dishonoured him afterwards ; and this is called polluting his holy name among the heathens ; it brings a disgrace upon his cause, and is crucifying him afresh, and putting him to an open shame, which is polluting his holy name indeed.

Once more. Our bodies are a kind of garment to our souls, even as our Lord's human nature, in which the fulness of his Godhead dwells, is called "a garment dipped in blood." And we read of a heavenly company who are said to come out of great tribulation, and to have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb ; which robes appear to be their bodies, which were cleansed by the blood of Christ as well as their souls. Hence we read of the redemption of the body, and of being ransomed from the grave and redeemed from death ; and, when this is done, these bodies of ours will be washed, yea changed. He shall change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto his glorious body, that we may be like him, and see him as he is. Therefore, he that keeps himself unspotted from the world, keeps his garments undefiled.

We read of some in this book who were not defiled with women ; which means that they were not defiled with the doctrines of Jezebel the witch, the Roman church ; nor with the filthy practices of the whore of Babylon, the city of Rome which is full of spiritual fornication, and all other uncleanness ; and she has polluted thousands with the doctrines of

devils, the pollutions of the flesh, and by crying up the filthy rags of her own boasted righteousness.

Now, that there should be a few such names, and such undefiled ones, in such a day as this, must be for signs and wonders from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion : but the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin, and God will keep his own from the paths of the destroyer. Nevertheless, there are some sins which will leave a stain on the character of the brightest saint as long as the world stands, even though he be complete in his covenant head, and without fault before the throne in him ; and that is, “ adultery with a neighbour’s wife. A wound and dishonour shall he get, and his reproach shall not be wiped away.” Prov. vi. 33. We may see this in David. Every atheist and deist will, to the present day, throw this at him, even though he is in heaven ; but they never mention his repentance of it, nor of the sufferings he underwent on the account of it ; for their stomachs are so vitiated that they can eat up nothing that is to be found in God’s people but their sin. Blessed be God our Saviour for ever, that he should preserve and keep, in such a day of apostasy, heresy, and hypocrisy, as this, a few such names in such robes, and give them such a character and such encouragement as that which next follows.

“ And they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.” Our Lord here gives us to understand that it is sin which separates between him and the soul ; yea, it is sin that hides his face from the sinner,

so that he will not hear his prayers, for he is far from God by wicked works. The conscience must be purged from sin before we can be made nigh by the blood of Christ. Pardoning love brings us nigh to him, and unites us with him; and the soul that fears him with a filial fear, and that cleaves to him in love, walks with him. "They shall walk with me." Levi walked with me in peace and equity, saith the Lord; that is, the Lord gave him, or revealed to him, the covenant of life and peace, and he enjoyed the peace which the Lord gave him, and kept a good conscience before him, and towards him.

"Walk humbly with thy God," saith Amos. This shews that pride separates between us and God. But the poor soul that knows the vileness of his own heart, and what a debtor he is to unmerited and unexpected grace, will see enough of himself, in the Lord's light, to debase himself in the dust before him, however upright God may keep him. It was the presence of the Lord with Daniel that turned all his comeliness into corruption, and stripped him of all his strength. To walk with the Lord is to exercise faith in him, and to trust in him; it is to walk in his favour, in the light of his countenance; to hope in him, and expect all needful supplies from him; to exercise patience towards him; to be accountable to him, and give up our accounts daily before him: to walk in his fear, as in his immediate presence, under his eye and narrow inspection, and as interested in his blood and righteousness, and relying upon his wisdom to make our way plain, and to direct our

steps, and in a constant dependance on him for strength and support.

“These shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.” White, and white raiment, are mentioned in my text, and therefore I shall speak to that point in my further discourse. But that which puzzles me most of all is, what can be meant by the phrase, “they are worthy.” I never saw any worthiness in myself before I was called, nor since I have been called; nor have I ever seen either worth or worthiness in any other; no, not even in those who say they are perfect in the flesh, and that they can live, and do live, without sin, or sinning; for these, I believe, of all men, are the most unworthy, having given themselves up to lying, or to speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with a hot iron. “For, if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” 1 John i. 8. John owns that, if such words were to drop from his own mouth, he would be a man deceived by the devil, and that no truth, nothing but lies, could be found in him. If this worthiness is mentioned on the account of grace, all grace is from the Lord; and so is every good and perfect gift. The preparation of the heart, and the fruit of the lips, are his own work; and so is all usefulness or fruitfulness to our fellow-creatures in this world, for he works in us both to will and to do; and, as for our flesh, and the evils in it, they work continually against both willing and doing. I read of some that shall be “accounted worthy to obtain the world to come, and the resurrection from the

dead." Luke xx. 35. But on what account they shall be so accounted, I cannot tell, unless it be the Lord praising his own righteousness put upon them, or applauding the Holy Spirit's work in them. For the robe of his righteousness is of inestimable worth, and so are the Spirit's productions in them; the former sets the saint forth as all fair and comely without; and the latter, as all glorious within. And now for the words of my text:

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." This overcomer must be an Israelite indeed, or one that has overcome the accusations of the law, and Satan, and conscience; and overcome his own guilt, shame, fear and confusion of face, at a throne of grace, by prayer. He is one that has cried day and night for victory over these, and deliverance from them; for, if he never did prevail with God against these, they will prevail and overcome him. But the kingdom of God, or the empire of grace, or the superabounding love and power of God, which is promised to overcome and subdue our sins, doth suffer violence, and the violent, which are sorely distressed, and cry without ceasing, who cannot rest, and will not give up, do take it by force, in spite of all the bulwarks and batteries that the devil casts up to obstruct us in the siege. Those deceitful workers and warriors, which Paul examined and palmed upon the devil, were

detected by this part of their examination ; “ I will know, [says Paul,] not their speech, but their power ;” that is, what power they had with God, and what power he had displayed in them, and what power had been communicated to others by them. To this touchstone Jeremiah brought the legion of false prophets in his days. Jeremiah declared that Israel should go into captivity to Babylon, and all the vessels of the temple, some of which were gone, and the rest were to follow. Satan’s agents prophesied a deliverance in two full years, and the restoration of all the vessels then carried away. Jeremiah calls for a proof of their being prophets by their power with God : “ But, if they be prophets, and if the word of the Lord be with them, let them now make intercession to the Lord of hosts, that the vessels which are left in the house of the Lord, and in the house of the king of Judah, and at Jerusalem, go not to Babylon.” Jer. xxvii. 18. The prophet could not get them at this ; they were more expert in predictions than they were at petitions. Besides, Satan had suffered loss by this kind of proof before ; Elijah caught four hundred of his prophets in this trap on mount Carmel previous to this.

An overcomer must be a believer ; “ for who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus Christ is the son of God ?” There is but one war that can be strictly called a holy war ; and but one real religious fight, and that is the fight of faith, in which no infidel can succeed, though he may en-

gage, because he can only beat the air. "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life." But how can he engage the opposers of faith's fight who has no faith to be opposed? And how can he fight to lay hold of eternal life in heaven, who hath no life of grace in his heart, nor life of glory in hope? The poor quickened soul that labours under wrath and bondage, and who believes in the justice of God, fights hard to lay hold of Christ by faith; and, when this is done, he engages in a continual fight to lay hold of a life of glory in heaven. "So run I, [saith Paul,] but not at uncertainty; so fight I, but not like one that beats the air." And this warfare and our life end together; for, till death interfere, there is no discharge from this war; the death-bed decides the victory: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is a crown of righteousness laid up for me."

Moreover, faith lays hold of the true riches, and is the confidence of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. Thus she is beforehand with the victory, is sure of the spoil, and always shares with certainty, by taking hold of the victory which Christ hath already obtained for us: "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

But again. Faith always works by love; for love is the banner under which she fights, and love is with the parties on whose side she fights: and it is the love of the great Sovereign that constrains us to engage in this mysterious war, and will constrain every good soldier

to bear the fatigue of it; and surely "we shall be more than conquerors through him that hath loved us."

Again. If they overcome Satan and Antichrist, it must be done "by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and by a love that is stronger than death." Rev. xii. 11. Pardon, peace, life, justification from future punishment, and redemption from wrath, from the world, from all the evil of it, from death and the grave, by the blood of the Lamb, is great encouragement to fight. Moreover, by the blood of the Lamb we get a good conscience, a good state of health, and a good countenance; and, should we contract guilt by a partial giving way, or faint retreat, the blood of the Lamb purges it away, so that we do not fight under a load of guilt, and the dread of damnation, which at times will make the most courageous men faint-hearted.

Again. "The ransom of a man's life is his riches." And who will not fight for his whole estate? Besides, every believer knows, that to turn his back upon Christ, and submit to the devil and sin, is couching down between two burdens, misery in this life, and despair of the next; for he loses both worlds. Besides, the blood of the Lamb secures strength equal to the day, and the presence of the Lord himself. The believer is not his own, but his Lord's; and the Captain will not lose his own men.

The word of their testimony is a great encouragement to fight. Truth makes us free, and is both shield and buckler; and the testimony of it in the

heart is the Spirit of power that applied it, and that bears his witness to our election, justification, and adoption, through it; and loving God better than a miserable life makes us more than conquerors indeed. It was this that made Stephen's face to shine when the stones were flying about his head.

There is a war between the flesh and the spirit; between the law in the members and that in the mind; between our in-bred corruptions and the grace of God: nor will all the fleshly perfection in this world ever make peace between these two different nations, and opposite parties, in the believer's heart. God proclaimed a war in Eden between the serpent and the woman; and between the generation of vipers united to the old serpent, and Christ and the chosen seed in him. God himself hath put enmity between these; nor hath he ever appointed or invested any one with the office of a mediator, to stand in this gap. Christ came not upon any such errand; I came not to send peace upon earth, but rather divisions; yea, to send a sword and a fire between these parties; and what will I do in future if it be already kindled? He that takes upon himself to remove this enmity, and to demolish this offence of the cross, had his investiture from the god that the pope had his from; and we may say of him, as the Holy Ghost does of the other, that the dragon gave him his seat, his power, and great authority. Christ hath chosen us out of this world, and tells us that the world will hate us; yea, You shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But then those that

are labouring to remove these bounds which God hath placed between the wilderness and the fruitful field, are, in religion, as an amphibious creature is among the brute creation, which is sometimes in the waters among the fish, and sometimes on land among the beasts. These are shunned by both, and fit companions for neither; and so is the hypocrite: in the world he is not approved, because he mimics the holy tongue; and in the church he is hated, because he is unsavoury; not admire him but those that speak half Hebrew and half Ashdod.

But what is said to us in the type and figure of Sardis, no doubt respects the hour of temptation, by which the church hath been tried; and it looks to something future, by which she will be tried; for every church of the seven, and those represented by them, have their own particular trials; nor are these trials to be understood of the particular trials of private believers, but of such trials as shall exercise the whole church, and all those who profess to belong to it; for Christ speaks to the whole body, to those that have a name to live, as well as to those few names which have not defiled their garments. Now this hour of temptation hath exercised us all. It is called a temptation, because every thing seemed to our view to run quite out of the usual channel of Providence. It is the comfort of faith that Christ is king of nations, and king of Zion; but, when we see the devil let loose upon us, and the basest of all nations, and such a general confederacy among ourselves with them, our hearts were moved as the trees

of the wood are moved, and as the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem were when "they heard that Syria was confederate with Ephraim." We had the preparations and threats of an infernal convention abroad, and a most damnable faction at home; so that we had work enough to keep our hearts "from fear, and from fainting between the tails of these two smoking firebrands." Isa. vii. 4. It looked as if the Lord of hosts had resigned his government, and turned us over into the hands of a fierce king, and a cruel lord: the devil and the convention are both these. We know that it is by Christ that kings reign, and princes decree justice; but, when we saw one throne fall, and another became vacant, and heard nothing from Baal's prophets but the immediate destruction of all the rest, we might well wonder; for, if the olive-tree give us up, and the vine be not suffered to govern, we know the bramble will: and not a few, both at home and abroad, put their trust under that prickly shadow, "till a fire went out of the cedars, and began to consume the bramble." Judges ix. 15. When Christ was invested with his offices, God laid the foundations of the earth, that he might plant the heavens, Isa. li. 16; but, when we saw the foundations of the earth out of course, and the dark places of it full of the inhabitants of cruelty, we staggered, both at the work of God's hands, and at the word of his grace; for, if the foundations be destroyed, what shall the righteous do? By the apparent frowns of heaven, and the terrible fierce anger of men, "God seemed to turn us to

destruction ;” but one smiling Providence said, “ Return, ye children of men.” Then judgment, which seemed to favour the wicked, returned unto righteousness, and the upright in heart were glad enough, both to see it and follow it.

What made this temptation the more complicated was, the sudden spring of a copious crop of tares. We were all on a sudden swarming alive with prophets ; and many, who never had one ray of light into divine revelation, saw wonders in the womb of providence ; but they prophesied nothing good to the quiet of the land. God was but a little displeased, but these helped forward the calamity. In a former reign, which stunk of popery, the two points of doctrine then in use were, passive obedience and non-resistance ; but in our day, under a prince that leaveth the King of kings to reign and rule unmolested in the conscience, we have heard of two more, the rights of man, and the majesty of a mob ; and under these two heads, sin and death have reigned, till millions have lost their property, and tens of thousands have lost their lives. But Tom Paine gave the word, and great was the company that published it. Thousands fled to America to escape the threatened destruction ; and those that tarried at home saw the salvation of God.

The touchstone of this hour of temptation always appeared to me to be this: Those who had received the spirit of French liberty in the power of Satan (which always accompanied it), soon spake as this spirit gave them utterance. Nothing was to be

heard but reviling the gods, speaking evil of rulers, laughing at authority, casting off all fear of God, and debasing the king; resisting the ordinance of God, and hoping for a temporal deliverance from all superiors. Surely the old serpent cast this water out of his mouth like a flood, to cause the bride, the Lamb's wife, to be carried away with the flood: but the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and received the waters of the flood; for not the broken and contrite, not the heavenly-minded soul, but those that were earthly, sensual, and devilish, and only they, found a sweetness in these bitters waters: and it is true that many died of these waters, because they were made bitter. Hence we see that neither the doctrines nor the politics of devils can work effectually in the souls of the righteous; only in them that perish.

By this hour of temptation God tried thousands that were under the oaths of allegiance, and not a few who had subscribed the articles of the established church, that we might see what restraint oaths and subscriptions have upon the consciences of hypocrites; and in this balance many of high degree were found to be a lie, and those of low degree vanity. But those whom the grace of God had exalted to safety, were kept by the power of God. Here was the patience and faith of the saints.

The great heat of this hour of temptation is abated; for, what with hanging, transporting, and going to America, God is causing the evil spirits to

pass out of the land ; and, when he hath scattered these kings from it, I hope it will be as white as the snow in Salmon. It hath been our lot to live in the age of reason, in which numbers have lost their senses, some their souls, and many all their religion. But, for the elect's sake, the Lord hath shortened the days of this unreasonable age.

This hour of temptation was most remarkable for the conjunction that appeared in it. Every one that drank into the gall of bitterness, whether at home or abroad, were all soon cemented together in one solid bond of iniquity. Little was heard of but the corresponding societies ; and, to make this league with death, and this covenant with hell, the more firm, it was ratified with the sacred oath of God. By the means of this firm compact some were emboldened to shed much innocent blood ; while many, who were unfaithful both to God and mammon, crept into corners, and bid them God speed ; others shouted at their victories, and some mourned at their ill fate : and by these means God brought them in heirs, and joint heirs, in the guilt of all the blood shed abroad, and of all the rebellion at home, as sure as the builders of the prophets' sepulchres shared with Cain in the blood of Abel. " One woe is past, and behold there come two woes more hereafter."

The next enemy that we shall have to overcome after these four winds upon the great sea have ended their present strife, will be of a different nature from this. In this war between Michael and the dragon,

the dragon hath appeared in his ancient hue, which is red, agreeably to his ancient character,—“ a murderer from the beginning.” But Satan, as well as a Frenchman, can both fawn and fight. His next appearance will not be that of a warrior, but of a fowler; not with fire and sword, but with trap and net. We read of a certain beast that hath long made war with the saints, and who hath a great work to accomplish in a little time; which work is, “ to scatter the power of the holy people,” which will bring Zion to her last furnace of affliction, and antichrist to his last triumph. Dan. xii. 7. After this the Gentiles’ let, and the Jews’ sumbling-block, will be removed, and the hoary head of the man of sin will go down to the grave in blood, while sorrow and sighing within the walls of Zion will be heard no more. When this red dragon is destroyed, the woman with child will cast out her sorrows, and a nation shall be born at once. There is an outer court, that lies crooked with the angel’s reed, which is not to be measured. Rev. xi. 1, 2. The church, which Christ hath purchased with his own blood, is called the temple of the Holy Ghost, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them. This is God’s house, let the materials of it be of what sect or party soever they may. Then what can the outer court be but such as compass their Maker about with lies and deceit; who draw near to him with their lips, while their hearts are far from him? To gain over these to the son of perdition is the work which is now on the

wheels; and look which way soever you will you may see it. The last blast of God upon the continent has scattered the emigrants into all winds; and, while some of our watchmen sleep, these sow tares which spring up apace; while the bastard race, which are nearest the holy place, (I mean such as have escaped the rod of God, and the forcible application of truth,) these are meeting them half way. I have always considered the leader of the Arminians a true servant of the pope, and the son of his handmaid, I mean the whore of Babylon; yea, the model of his daubed wall came from Rome. Female classes and their leaders were taken from the nuns and their mother abbesses; men classes and their leaders from the monks and their superiors; and the other bands, perfect or select, from the different orders of monks, friars, and nuns. And, as for the foundation article, justification by works, they all meet and centre in this. And the works of supererogation, and that of sinless perfection, both amount to one and the same lie; and we know that no lie is of the truth; and, as they agree in the foundation and superstructure, so are they cemented in one spirit; for neither the one nor the other can endure to hear of the sovereignty of God, nor of his electing grace among the children of men. Hence we hear of little else now but confederacies and coalitions; Arians, Socinians, Sabellians, Arminians, and those who have for some time held the truth in unrighteousness, are now all collecting into one heap of ma-

terials, which will, ere long, be used to build up and complete the tower of Babylon. The election of God, which chooses us out of the world; his holy call, which separates us from it; the application of Christ's blood, which redeems us from among men; and the operation of his Spirit, which makes us to differ from them; yea, the whole offence of the cross, and the discrimination of the grace of God, is now called, even by doctors, 'walls of bigotry;' which, with respect to such doctors and the world, may be true, but not with respect to God's elect and the world; for they are chosen out of it, nor are they of it. Upon this ground the whore of Babylon will flourish; for, as soon as these heavy calamities are over, the whole bulk of the papists which have suffered will be called upon by the priests to reflect upon the judgments which have been on the earth; and, instead of telling the truth, that God sent these judgments on the continent to avenge the blood of his saints which hath been shed there, they will tell them it is for ill-treating Christ's vicar, for neglecting the mass, despising the images, and lightly esteeming the religion, of the holy see. And, as the devil speaks these lies by the priests, so will he blind the eyes of the credulous that they shall not see them, but believe them; and by these means will that goddess rise to boast "that she sits as a queen, and shall see no more sorrow, neither widowhood, nor the loss of children," when both will overtake her in one day.

We have for some time heard much about the

want of more liberty to the catholics; and, though it hath been acknowledged that this cry was nothing but a pretext to overthrow the government, yet it is plain that the devil had a wheel within that wheel; for what he wants is, to bring the catholics into power; for antichrist will have some to protest against him till he can “accomplish to scatter the power of the holy people.” By which I do not understand the power of God, for who can scatter that? but the toleration act; the protection of the civil powers in the different countries where God hath inclined the hearts of rulers to grant it. In this last onset of Satan he had three engines at work against this impediment which lies in the way of antichrist: one was, the cry for catholic emancipation; the other was, the rebellion, perjury, and sedition, of some who were tolerated by this act; and the third was, the confederacy of those who, by uniting their forces together, are paving the way for the man of sin. They have made it manifest that their’s was not the camp of the saints; but, having enlisted themselves into the perfect band, they are on their march toward the triple crown. The overcomer in my text must overcome these; and I have no doubt but many will; “for those to whom the Lord speaks with a strong hand, and whom he instructs, dare not walk in the way of this people, nor say, A confederacy, with them.” Isa. viii. 11, 12.

Hence it appears that popery is spreading both at home and abroad, and will spread, that the hypo-

crites in our Zion may be gained over to the papists; and the catholics must come into office, and into power, that the toleration acts may be universally taken away. Then shall the power of the holy people be scattered; "the sun shall go down at noon, and the earth shall be darkened in the clear day." Then will the holy of holies be ransacked the third time, and the witnesses for truth be slain. This will be the day of the great and last slaughter; when the towers fall: "Alas! who shall live when the Lord doth this?"

But after three years and a half the spirit of life from God descends, and a cloud of witnesses once more appear for the God of Jacob, to raise up the city, which, till then, will be low in a low place. And blessed will those witnesses be "which will sow beside all waters, and send forth thither the feet of the ox and the ass."

For near seventy years will this present work be carying on; but before 1870 it will be completed; the golden city will cease, when the papal sun shall be turned into darkness, and the Turkish moon into blood: then shall the former be confounded, and the latter ashamed before the Lord of Hosts, who shall rise to reign in mount Zion; when he will collect the fulness of the Gentiles, restore the preserved of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. And in this present interval is the denunciation of Heaven applicable; "But wo be to him that worshippeth the beast." And it is plain that the cause of Satan's great wrath in the late

hour of temptation was, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time ; for the vial that is poured upon the popish sun leads on to that on the seat of the beast, which passes to the Turk, and ends upon the “ prince of the power of the air.” Read Rev. xvi.

But some, more wise than well read, have objected that this cannot be the hour of temptation, because it is not universal, so as to reach to all the inhabitants of the terraqueous globe. Let such take the parallel texts which follow : “ there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed ;” (Luke vii. 1.) And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world. Rev. xii. 9. “ And all the world wondered after the beast.” Rev. xiii. 3. To the first text it may be replied, that none of the natives of America were included in Augustus Cæsar’s taxation ; nor did all the Mahometan nations wonder after the Romish beast, but fought against him and beat him. No more doth this hour of temptation extend itself to the East Indies, the Friendly Islands, Botany Bay, or New Holland ; unless some of our disaffected who trade there, or some rebels who are banished, or the missionaries, have spread it there, which I think self-preservation will teach them to forbear ; for, though many here have changed their God for Tom Paine’s image of human reason, and others have cast off all affection for their sovereign, and ascribed majesty to themselves ; yet heathen nations seldom change their gods, which indeed are

no gods; nor do they so readily cast off all regard to their chiefs.

The epistle out of which my text is taken, and the one which succeeds it, are directed to the angel of the church of Sardis, and to that of Philadelphia, and to the two churches succeeding each other, which were typified by them; but is there any thing said to these angels, or to the churches of Christ which they presided over, than can be applicable to the American Indians, the rude Arabs, the natives of Negro-land, Lapland, or the Hottentots? The contents of the epistle are reproofs; rebukes, and threatenings, to them that have a name to live when dead in trespasses and sins; and the approbationary and encouraging parts of the epistle are directed to a few sacred names, who are clean from the corruptions that are in the world through lust, and from the spiritual pollutions of the whore of Babylon, which cannot have to do with the kingdoms of Benin or Japan. This hour of temptation was sent to discover the hearts of the hypocrites in gospel Zion; their disaffection to rulers, and their unruly spirits; the corruption of their hearts, their rotten principles, their perjury, their presumption in assuming the ministerial office, and their craftiness and deception in it; that the godly might see them and shun them; and that such as have long called themselves the Evangelical Association, might, by slow degrees, go over to the holy see. And, on the other hand, Christ, by this trying hour, hath made manifest those few to whom he hath given an honest and good heart, that these

might take to themselves the encouragement that he holds forth to them; and by being tried might appear the brighter. And this end is now answered; the devil has got his chaff, and the fan will soon be laid aside. And the Saviour's concluding oration confirms what I have said, and all the churches shall know: he doth not say all the seed of Adam, but "all the churches shall know that I am he which try the reins and the hearts, and I will give to every one of you according to your works." I must now pass on to my second head, which is to shew that the overcomer

"Shall be clothed in whiteraiment." This shews us that temptations and fiery trials are, under the wise management of Israel's Holy One, of a purifying nature; because God sends them to stir up, discover, and bring to light, and to our own feelings, the base metal that lies at the bottom, more or less of every chosen vessel; and that the operations of his Spirit may purge the same, empty us of self, and renew us more and more in the spirit of our minds. Moreover; in an hour of temptation like this, when the accuser of the brethren was let loose; when destruction rode in triumph; when anarchy struggled for the reins; when hypocrites and abjects assumed the honour of majesty; when many were swayed in their minds, and those who stood fast had death presented to them in a thousand forms; when flesh and blood urges all her pleas, strengthened and seconded by carnal reason and unbelief; when all the dreadful consequences of apostasy and a denial of Christ be considered and imagined; here is a long lingering martyrdom, a dying daily,

till submission to the will of God take place, and the mind is at a point, and the fears and doubts be removed by the Holy Spirit of God, and a fellowship with Christ in his sufferings be felt, and the mind be made conformable unto his death. A soul that has felt the pains of hell and the joys of heaven, and had the honour of Christ at heart, had not a few of these workings in his mind ; as for the time-server, he can warp to the strongest side, and hold the vicarage of Bray to the end. However, these trials, and fallings into trouble, temptations, and distresses, are intended by our good God to purify us ; and so it is written ; “ And some of them of understanding shall fall to try them, to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end ;” Dan. xi. 35 ; and some that have been tried of late do walk with Christ in white.

Again, white linen raiment was always the garments of God’s priests ; the ephod in which they drew near to him was made of white linen. Hence this whiteraiment is expressive of their priestly office, of their belonging to the royal priesthood, and of their having nearness and access to him, and of their honest confessions, prayers, praises, thank offerings, and every other spiritual sacrifice being acceptable, well-pleasing, and delightful to him ; and walking with him shews his great condescension and familiarity, in admitting such poor creatures to have any fellowship, intimacy, or communion with him.

Again, this white raiment is the saint’s wedding garment, that justifies us freely from all things, and

which will procure our admittance into the ivory palace. Hence Zion's triumph ; " I will rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation ; he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." Here Zion confesses that it was her God that clothed her with this garment, and her Lord who covered her with this robe. Nor can it be supposed that the King of kings would take a poor wretch from the dust, and lift a beggar from the dunghill, and espouse her to himself, and take her home to his ivory palace, or mansion of glory, covered with nothing but her own rags and tatters ; and yet we see that neither the Arminians nor the Papists trust in any other. But, if all Zion's own righteousnesses were but filthy rags, then what must their's be ? Besides, the white raiment of Christ's spouse is the Lord's grant, not the work of her own hands ; and so it follows ; " Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him ; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white ; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints." Rev. xix. 7, 8. Hence it appears that souls who walk with him in white are espoused to him, and are in union with him ; flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone ; and are joined to him, and one spirit with him.

Once more. It was a custom in the east coun-

tries, for overcomers in games, particular persons at feasts, and on days of great rejoicings, to be clothed in white raiment. And to this agrees my text, that the overcomers shall walk in white ; and at our feasts the wedding garment must be worn, for it is well known that the king cast him from among his guests that had not on a wedding garment ; and I before told you that the cause of Zion's joy was, because her Lord had covered her with the robe of righteousness.

Moreover, this walking with the Lord in white denotes their innocency ; they were clean through the word that he had spoken unto them ; they were complete in him : all fair and without spot ; for such a character he gives his church in one of his love-speeches in the holy song. Nor is this walking with him in white confined to this present world ; but she will appear in this robe on the throne at the grand assize, and walk with him in the realms of bliss, and share in his glory, titles, majesty, and honours, in the world to come, and that to all eternity.

“ And I will not blot out his name out of the book of life.” This clause at first sight appears strange, because of the stability of the covenant, the promises of it being all yea and amen in Christ ; and because of the faithfulness of God, whose counsels of old are faithfulness and truth ; and because of the satisfaction of Christ, the justice and immutability of God, and of the promise being sure to all the seed. For, if by this book of life we are to understand God's decree

of the election in Christ, in whom we were chosen and to whom we were given, in whom we were ever loved, and in whom God, that cannot lie, according to the promise of eternal life, which he gave us in Christ before the foundation of the world; yea he ordained us to it, and sent his dear Son to give it; and he hath brought that life and immortality to light by the gospel. This is God's decree, and it is confirmed by an oath, that the heirs of promise might have a strong consolation arising from the certainty of their enjoyment of it. Could this decree, oath, and promise, fail; could one single name included in that decree, or recorded in the divine mind, memory, and love, be blotted out, we should stand in jeopardy every hour, nor would there be much cause for us to rejoice because our names are written in heaven.

Besides, the Holy Spirit never dictates one petition in the heart of the righteous against blotting our names out of God's decree of election, which he most certainly would if there was the least possibility or danger of it, for he searches the deep things of God, and makes intercession for us.

There are other books besides this of election; though this is called the Lamb's book of life. There is the book of providence, in which all creatures that live, move, and have their being, stand as it is written; "for yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights: and every living substance that I have made will I destroy [blot out] from off the face of the earth." Gen. vii. 4.

Moses desired to have his name blotted out of God's book unless he would forgive the idolatry of Israel; and God's answer to him is, "Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book." Exodus xxxii. 33. It is plain, also, that there is a book of this present life, which is said to be not on high, but under heaven, where earthly creatures live. "Thou shalt blot out the name of Amelek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget it." Deut. xxv. 19. Again, "Let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven: and I will make of thee a great nation." Deut. ix. 14. But neither of these books are intended in my text. Whatever book is meant, it certainly respects not the few names in Sardis which shall walk with Christ in white, but those that "have a name to live while they are dead." But then what book of life can dead lifeless hypocrites have their names in? Not in the book of election; for all persons who have their names there are ordained to eternal life, and God is the covenant God of them all; I will be their God, and they shall be my people: but these referred to in my text have only a name to live, but are dead; and "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

The holy scriptures are the book of life, as well as election. Search the scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me the promise of life; and Christ's word, which is spirit and life, is found in them. In this book of life we have the number of all the children of Israel

that came out of Egypt ; but they sinned grievously against God, tempted him and provoked him, until he blotted them all out of his book, except those whose names stood in the book of election. For, when Moses numbered them a second time, none were found alive of that evil generation, save Joshua and Caleb ; these did not provoke ; he only destroyed them that believed not.

Judas stands enrolled among the apostles ; but, when he sold his master, he is stiled the traitor ; and, another taking his office, his former office-character was blotted out. The fools that took no oil in their vessels are called virgins ; but they are bid to depart, and called workers of iniquity : this blots the former name out. The antediluvian professors are stiled the sons of God ; but, when lust prompted them to marry with the cursed race of Cain, God saw that their wickedness was great, and he destroyed them ; and they were ungodly men, and no other, that were destroyed, for “ God brought in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.” When they are stiled wicked and ungodly, their former nominal titles are blotted out. And so the children of Israel have the following names standing in the scriptures of truth : Ammi, my people ; Ruhamah, having obtained mercy : but Lo-ammi, and Lo-ruhamah blots the former out ; and so says God, For ye are not my people, and I will not be your God. Again, She is not my wife neither am I her husband. Read Hosea, chap. i. ii. This divorcing, putting away, changing of names, and blotting out,

took place when the Jews had filled up the measure of their sins by persecuting, rejecting, and murdering, the Son of God and his apostles, when the kingdom was taken from them and given to the Gentiles ; and this is expressly called blotting them out of the book of the living, as it is written ; “ They gave me also gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. Let their table become a snare before them ; and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap. Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not ; and make their loins continually to shake. Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger take hold of them. Let their habitation be desolate, and let none dwell in their tents. For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten, and talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded. Add iniquity to their iniquity ; and let them not come into thy righteousness. Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.” Psalm lxix. Now, in the matter before us, this epistle is written to a church under the type of Sardis. A church is the household of faith, or a congregated body of believing souls ; and all that believe are passed from death to life ; yea, he that believeth hath everlasting life, and shall live, and must live ; for the just shall live by faith. The word church includes the whole of them ; and they have not only the name church put upon them in this epistle, but a living name, “ a name to live, but thou art dead ;” the last word, dead, blots out and disan-

nuls the name live. And so they are considered by us; we do not consider Judas in his professing name, nor in his apostolic office, but as the traitor, and son of perdition; and so we consider all the rest of the apostates and hypocrites, not according to what they were in their profession, but according to their real character when God made them manifest. Hence the name Israel in the best sense is now denied to the posterity of Jacob; They are not all Israel which are of Israel. This name is now put upon the Gentile church. Read Is. xciv. v. And so the name of Jew is not allowed to them; "I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; I will make them of the synagogue of Satan." The latter name blots out, makes void, and disannuls the former altogether; for the name of Jew is a sacred name, and in the best sense applicable to none but a real subject of the King of the Jews; for "he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, but he is a Jew which is one inwardly." And not a few spoken to, and pointed out, in this epistle, have had their names blotted out by the discovery that Christ hath made of them in this hour of temptation. Many, who before were looked upon to be upright men, and lively ministers of the word, were soon discovered to be guilty of perjury, insurrection, and rebellion, against both God and the king; sins which Christ never suffered one of his apostles to be guilty of, or fall into: so far from it, that the Holy Spirit, which spake in them, commanded every soul that professed

Christ to be subject to the higher powers, to obey magistrates, to fear God and honour the king ; to be subject not 'only for wrath, but for conscience sake ; yea, these warned the unruly, and vehemently exclaimed against those that were self-willed, presumptuous, and not afraid to speak evil of dignities. But many of ours, who had a name to live, have quite broken the yoke, and burst the bands ; and Christ in this epistle has blotted out their name, which was but a name to live, and has put them upon another list, in the eyes of his people ; not among the killed and wounded, but among the dead, who never had the spirit of life in them ; and their flocks are gone with them. " God hath taken away their names out of the book of life, out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Rev. xxii. 19. For their name, whether in the city or in the book, is only a name to live. Hence it appears that this book of life is the lively oracles of God, the scriptures of truth. I proceed.

Are not the scriptures of truth written on the minds, and put into the hearts, of God's saints ? Does he not promise that the new covenant and the blessings of it shall be experienced by his people in the pardon of their sins, and be written on their minds, and on the fleshly tables of their hearts, so as to make them living epistles, known and read of all men ? Yea, the same Spirit that dictated the scriptures, and inspired holy men to write them, Paul says, writes the same on our hearts. " Ye are our epistles, written not

with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God ; not on tables of stone, but on the fleshly tables of the heart." And not a few who have had their names written here in this book, in these living epistles, and who have had a place in their mind, judgment, memory, conscience, heart, and affections ; of whom we could say, and have said, as Paul did, " Ye are in our hearts to die and live with you." But God blots many out of this book of life : and it is to be remarked, that it is common among men, when they discover a person to be a different man from what they once thought, to say, ' He, or such an one, is quite out of my books.' Nor, could Paul say of Alexander the coppersmith, Demas, Philetus, Hermogenes, and Hymeneus, that these were in his heart to live and die with them ? No, God had made them manifest that they were neither true fellow-labourers, nor yoke-fellows, with Paul. God blotted out the above names from his book, and from the heart and affection of his faithful servant Paul. And so it is in this epistle written to us ; many by subscribing the articles of the establishment, and then joining with them that hate the truth, are discovered by the word of God and by their own conduct to be none of them that love the truth and peace, or who received the truth in the love of it ; for not such, but those that do not receive the truth in the love of it, shall be given up to strong delusions, to believe a lie and be damned. A real child of God will hold fast that which he hath till Christ come ; for it is he who

keeps the word of his patience that he will keep from the hour of temptation; and it is they who keep Christ's saying, and only they, that shall never see death. These are blotted out of the book of the sacred scriptures, where their name to live stood; and this epistle declares them dead; and the Lord's manifestation of them shews us where to apply his declaration of them. And God will make them that are not his, work themselves out of their children's books too; for, when they exhibit their pride, stiffness, stubbornness, and inflexibility, before the word of truth, that they will neither bow, yield, nor submit to divine revelation, and the will of God made known therein, we know by our own experience where they are; for neither the unruly, presumptuous, nor rebellious, stand on the list of God's obedient ones, but they dwell in a dry land. And he will blot them out of the affections and prayers of his people, however painful it may be; as we see in Samuel. Saul had a strong standing in the heart and in the prayers of Samuel; yea, he mourned for Saul, even till God rebuked him for it. "And the Lord said to Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him?" Saul had turned his back upon the word of God, and had not kept that which the Lord had committed to him when he sent him against Amalek; for which a heavy charge was brought in against him, for he had refused God's orders, and followed his own will, as appears by the charge following:

"And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight

in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king." 1 Sam. xv. 23. After this, all Samuel's affections and mournings to God for him were of no avail; nor did God ever after hear or answer his own prayer, either by dream, vision, or prophet; but an evil spirit from the Lord was soon sent upon him, which influenced him with a murdering disposition, till he killed all the Lord's priests at Noph, and sought the life of David, and went from bad to worse; first to inquire of the witch of Endor, and from that to suicide; and next to the devil; for "no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." 1 John iii. 15. Thus doth God blot the disobedient out from under heaven by death, and out of the holy scriptures, and from any part in that which is written therein, when he makes them manifest, and out of the hearts and affections of his children, however beloved by them. Nor have I a single doubt upon my mind but that this whole epistle, out of which my text is taken, speaks to us; and I believe in my conscience that God hath given me the true sense of the Holy Spirit in what I have written upon the subject; and that the whole is applicable to those whom God hath discovered, and to whom the Lord himself applies it.

But this shall never be the case of God's elect, of

the few sacred names in Sardis who have not defiled their garments : no ; these shall walk with Christ in white ; and I will not, saith the Lord, blot their names out of the book of life. No ; not out of the book of God's decree to life, for they are ordained to eternal life ; nor out of the scriptures of truth, for they have a good report of the truth itself, therefore " their seed and their name shall remain there ;" nor out of the book of God's remembrance ; for the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance : nor out of the hearts of the saints, for they are in one bond of love ; nor out of the conscience of sinners, for God makes them manifest there, as may be seen by the foolish virgins applying to them for oil when their own lamps were out ; and in their consciences they shall abide as a witness against them for their enmity, and that even in hell itself. I will not blot his name out of the book of life,

" But I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." This is opposed to disowning, disapproving, and denying, a sinner at the last day ; which lies in these words, " Depart from me, I know you not." This shall not be the case with the few names in Sardis : no ; I will confess them before my Father ; I will own them, and acknowledge them ; I will accept them, and embrace them ; I will applaud them for their faithful adherence to me and my truth ; and I will present them to my Father with a " Behold me, and the children which thou hast given me." Yea, I will shew you plainly of the Fa-

ther, and he will accept and bless you, and glorify you in me, and with me, and you shall be made perfect in one. And I will confess you before the angels of heaven as my faithful followers and servants, who have suffered much dishonour, disgrace, and reproach for my sake, and who have come through great tribulation; and they shall own and honour you as the heirs of glory, and as my spouse and bride, and shout and rejoice when you shall enter the royal palace. Thus will the Lord confess his faithful followers. And what he says is affectionate and fervent, in truth and sincerity, and may be safely depended upon and expected when a few more days are rolled over our heads.

The Lord bless what hath been spoken. I add no more.

POSTSCRIPT.

THAT I may shew my reader what I now see, and what is going on in the world, as far as relates to the church of God, I will offer him my thoughts in a small compass, that he may take them in one view, and be upon his guard.

We have an account in Daniel of a fourth beast, a most terrible creature, with ten horns on its head. Dan. vii. 7. This is the last kingdom that is to be on the earth, or the last great empire. Dan. vii. 23. This is the Roman empire, divided into ten kingdoms; and the little horn among them is the pope, who rose up among the ten kings, and at the same time. Dan. vii. 20. Before this little horn three fell, Dan. vii. 8; which three little powers were subdued by Pepin and Charlemagne, kings of France, and given to the Pope; which gift furnished his head with the triple crown. This little horn is to be known,

1. By his exalting himself above all emperors, kings, or rulers, which the scriptures stile gods. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god. Dan. xi. 36.

2. By forbidding to marry. He shall not regard the desire of women. Mr. Mead says it is wiving.

1. The purchase of "Ravenna" subdued by Pepin
 2. The Kingdom of the Lombards "sub. by Charlemagne the Great or Charlemagne the son of Pepin"
 3. The State of "Rome" sub. by Charlemagne
 for further particulars see "Bishop Newton's
 2084

3. He is to be singled out by fighting against the people of God. "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them." Dan. vii. 21.

From the time of this horn's speaking great things, and warring with the saints, to his final destruction, is what Daniel wanted to know: "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" The answer given follows: "And the man clothed in linen lift up his right hand and left hand to heaven, and swear by him that liveth for ever, that it shall be for a time, times, and a half." Dan. xii. 7.

Before the expiration of this mysterious term there is to be "a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation to that same time." Dan. xii. 1. In the beginning of this time of trouble "he shall scatter the power of the holy people." Dan. xii. 7. When this power is scattered, "no arm shall withstand; neither shall the chosen people withstand; neither shall there be any strength to withstand." Dan. xi. 15. But what appears the most astonishing is, that some simple souls, real partakers of grace, shall be so far influenced and blinded, by the universal apostasy of professing hypocrites, that even they shall not contribute a little towards this time of Jacob's trouble. This is confirmed both by the Old Testament and the New: He shall have upright ones with him; a little daughter of Zion shall be corrupted, of which an ancient princess was a type; but "she shall not stand long on his side, neither be for him," Dan. xi. 17; for her ever-

lasting Father shall give her a timely call thence :
 “ And I heard another voice from heaven, saying,
 Come out of her, my people, that ye may be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” Rev. xviii. 4.

But the hypocrites in our Zion shall be the greatest promoters of this last calamity. These, being proud and haughty, and wise in their own conceit, shall seduce the above simple ones, and influence them with a spirit of rebellion and disaffection, and plunder them of their tenderness and reverence of Christ and his word : “ Also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision, but they shall fall.” Dan. xi. 14. The New Testament describes these robbers thus : “ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine ; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears ; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” 2 Tim. iv. 4. This time is come, and all these things have taken place : “ Nevertheless, the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.” Dan. xi. 32.

In this approaching “time of unparalleled trouble shall Michael, the great prince, stand up, which stands for his people.” Dan. xii. 1. He shall rise from his throne, and stand up, as he did at the time of Stephen’s trial ; and the heavens shall open, as they did then, and the skies shall begin to pour down righteousness. Isa. xlv. 8. He shall stand up during the time of this next conflict, and exert himself in be-

half of his saints : as soon as the power of his people is all gone, and they are worn out, overcome, and prevailed against; then shall Christ stand up, and execute judgment on the murderers of his people, and vindicate and justify the righteous; and shall destroy all his enemies, and establish the kingdoms of this world in the hands of his saints; and so it is written, " I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them, until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." Dan. vii. 21, 22.

This prevailing against the saints is not to be understood of their being subjected to popery, but of their being deprived of all civil power, and of their being slain or silenced, and so deprived of all public worship, which will continue three years and a half. They shall lie slain as many days as popery hath reigned years. But from the damnable deception of popery, and from the damnation that it exposes sinners to, and out of this last perilous time of trouble, shall all the elect of God be most surely delivered: so it follows, " And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was; and at that time (take notice of that) thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found in the book." Dan. xii. 1. In allusion to this, Christ promises, in his epistle written to us, first, that he will keep us in the hour of temptation; and, secondly, that he will not blot our names out of the book of life; but, in spite of the universal corruption of thousands, " some shall walk with him in white."

We must now go to the New Testament to see when Daniel's "time, times, and a half," in which this horn is to reign, began. Paul gives us two outward signs of it: first, a general apostasy; and, secondly, an open exhibition of the man of sin, in-
 somuch, that the children of light might see him, and apply the portrait drawn of him in the scriptures to him: "That day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." 2 Thess. ii. 3. Apostasy from the truth in the Roman empire paved the way, and then this son of perdition appeared, with the evident tokens of perdition upon him; and then that day came in which Daniel's "time, times, and a half," began. For the triple crown, and the word mystery at the front of it, and the title of universal bishop added to these, made him manifest; so that he was then clearly revealed and made known to the spouse of Christ; and she discovered him, exclaimed against him, and fled from him, as from the face of the old serpent which deceived Eve; and so it follows, "And there appeared another wonder in heaven, and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns; and his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth; and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." Rev. xii. 3, 4, 6. Hence it appears that a general falling away from Christ in the

Roman empire paved the way for this son of perdition ; and upon that he appeared, and the doctrines of devils soon broke loose from him, with which " he drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth." These stars were ministers, who had some light in the head, but no love to Christ in the heart. The devil drew these from their standing by his own "tail : the ancient and honourable he is the head, and the prophet that teacheth lies he is the tail." Isa. ix. 15. And now " the whole world wondered after the beast." The whole Roman empire became now, in the general, apostates from Christ ; the stars fell from their orbits, and united to this universal bishop ; and those that wondered after him followed him ; and this mystical body of apostates, that joined themselves to this new head of the church, the pope, make up the mystical body of the beast, which is to continue " for a time, times, and a half ;" throughout which period Daniel's eye pursued him, till he saw the end of him : " I beheld then, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake : I beheld till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." Dan. vii. 11. Hence it appears that, when the title of universal bishop took place, then the man of sin was revealed ; which was, as most agree, in the year 606 : then Daniel's " time, times, and a half," began. Then the woman saw him, bore her testimony against him, and fled from him ; for it was the world that wondered

after the beast, not the church, "for she is not of this world, even as Christ is not of this world."

Now let us see what becomes of her, and where she goes. She fled into the wilderness, just as the Israelites did from the face of Pharaoh (called a river dragon, Ezek. xxxix. 3.) into obscurity. The church existed for a while in private families, and after that in different corners of the earth: and this place was prepared of God to hide her in; and since that time God hath prepared more public places for her, and hath raised up some earthly princes to be of her, and to protect her, that her ministers "might feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days;" that is, a thousand two hundred and threescore years—which number of years appears to be exactly the same as Daniel's "time, times, and a half." So that the woman shall live in the wilderness as long as Antichrist lives on the throne; yea, she shall outlive him, and rise to reign upon his ruin.

During the above time Zion is to be fed; for so it is written: "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days clothed in sackcloth." Rev. xi. 3. But, towards the conclusion of this 1260 years, Daniel's time of trouble is to come on; and so it follows: "And, when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which

spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put into graves." Rev. xi. 7, 8, 9. By their not being buried, it seems as if they would be banished from the seat of the church, and so become dead to those that used to be fed by them; and by their lying in the street of the great city, it looks as if they were reserved to make sport for the beast, as Samson did for the Philistines: and so it follows; "And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and send gifts one to another. And, after three days and a half, the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them." Rev. xi. By this we see the glorious rise of the church, which is called heaven; and the rise of the witnesses, which is said to be in a cloud: by which it seems that the number of them will be greatly increased, as Paul says, "We are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses," and these will neither be wells without water, nor clouds without rain, as thousands now are; but clouds full of rain; by whom "Christ will come down as rain upon the mown grass, and as showers that water the earth."

This slaughter of the witnesses is the time of trouble before us, to which we are hastening apace; and, look which way you will, it appears. The son of perdition was revealed in the year 606, according to the best accounts, and one thousand two hundred and sixty years, or forty-two months, is all the time that he is to continue; which makes it plain that the longest time that "this hireling hath to accomplish his days" cannot exceed 1866, or 1870. And, if the eastern way of reckoning years, which was shorter than ours, is meant, then the account may be shorter: but that I must leave with the wonderful Calculator.

This is a dark and cloudy day, which Zion hath to meet with next, and the shadows of the evening are stretched out already. The Arminians, as I have shewed, are on the very basis of popery; and the outer court, which appears to me to be the bastard Calvinists, who hold the truth in unrighteousness, (for these are the nearest of any to the church, or to the inner court,) these are going, nay are already gone, over to the Arminians; they have formerly waged war with them, and opposed their tenets, "but now they have sent an ambassage, and desired conditions of peace." Luke xiv. 32. And some there are who detest this, and exclaim against it, who at the same time have drunk into the very murdering spirit of popery, and are in the same bond of iniquity with them that are now killing the protestants in Ireland; these are gone over in spirit to the

spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put into graves." Rev. xi. 7, 8, 9. By their not being buried, it seems as if they would be banished from the seat of the church, and so become dead to those that used to be fed by them; and by their lying in the street of the great city, it looks as if they were reserved to make sport for the beast, as Samson did for the Philistines: and so it follows; "And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and send gifts one to another. And, after three days and a half, the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them." Rev. xi. By this we see the glorious rise of the church, which is called heaven; and the rise of the witnesses, which is said to be in a cloud: by which it seems that the number of them will be greatly increased, as Paul says, "We are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses," and these will neither be wells without water, nor clouds without rain, as thousands now are; but clouds full of rain; by whom "Christ will come down as rain upon the mown grass, and as showers that water the earth."

This slaughter of the witnesses is the time of trouble before us, to which we are hastening apace; and, look which way you will, it appears. The son of perdition was revealed in the year 606, according to the best accounts, and one thousand two hundred and sixty years, or forty-two months, is all the time that he is to continue; which makes it plain that the longest time that "this hireling hath to accomplish his days" cannot exceed 1866, or 1870. And, if the eastern way of reckoning years, which was shorter than ours, is meant, then the account may be shorter: but that I must leave with the wonderful Calculator.

This is a dark and cloudy day, which Zion hath to meet with next, and the shadows of the evening are stretched out already. The Arminians, as I have shewed, are on the very basis of popery; and the outer court, which appears to me to be the bastard Calvinists, who hold the truth in unrighteousness, (for these are the nearest of any to the church, or to the inner court,) these are going, nay are already gone, over to the Arminians; they have formerly waged war with them, and opposed their tenets, "but now they have sent an ambassage, and desired conditions of peace." Luke xiv. 32. And some there are who detest this, and exclaim against it, who at the same time have drunk into the very murdering spirit of popery, and are in the same bond of iniquity with them that are now killing the protestants in Ireland; these are gone over in spirit to the

whore of Babylon ; and go over they must and shall, even every one but the elect of God ; for so it is written : “ And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Rev. xiii. 8. But wo, wo, be to all such ! And so says truth itself ; “ And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in the forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation ; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.” Rev. xiv. 9, 10.

In the last number of the Evangelical Magazine, (falsely so called) published by Mr. Chapman in Fleet-street, there is an ambassage of peace held out (though not in direct terms) even to the papists themselves, and this fulfils the word of God, that the outer court is given to the Gentiles, and that all shall worship the beast but the elect of God, whose names are written in heaven. Hence we must expect the cloud to gather thicker and thicker ; and wolves in pulpits, and hypocrites in pews, to increase more and more, till the pope’s last struggle and Zion’s last travail come on ; when the man of sin shall rise to the fulness of his stature, and the whore of Babylon to her highest dignity, saying, “ I sit as a queen, and shall know no sorrow, neither widowhood, nor

the loss of children. Then in one hour shall her judgments come." And the seventh trumpet of the seventh angel shall bring on this; for the same divine person in Daniel, who swore the beast should "continue for a time, times, and a half," swears, in John's hearing, that at the expiration of that time popish tyranny shall cease, and persecution be no more: and so it is written; "And the angel, which I saw upon the sea and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, that there should be time no longer. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." Rev. x. 5, 6, 7. Now, if my reader would know what the seventh trumpet proclaims, it is sounded upon the resurrection of the witnesses, when the Holy Ghost quickens them again, and raises them up to publish the gospel throughout the world. "And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." Rev. xi. 15. Now shall the gospel be preached throughout the world, and the greatest kingdom that ever stood be given to the saints of the Most High. But let us look at what is now going on, and be upon our guard. All but the elect shall worship the beast; therefore let us not be startled at the general apostasy of the members of

the outer court, for that is given to the Gentiles, therefore they must and shall have it; and it is now going over and submitting to the papists, that they may worship him; for all shall worship him but those whose names are in the book of life. The man of sin is now collecting what is given to him; and when all his members are united, his mystical body will be complete. "Then shall the beast be taken, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." Dan. vii. 11. The whore shall be utterly burnt with fire, for strong is the Lord God that judgeth her. But, to strengthen our hands, let us consider Michael, for he shall stand up when this perilous time comes on, and shall strengthen and deliver every one that shall be found written in the book. Dan. xxi. 1.

Thus, reader, I have given thee a sign of the times, and a true account of the work now on the wheels; nor shall all the hypocrites in Zion, nor all the enemies that I have in Britain, no, nor even time itself, prove me a false prophet in this, nor make this prediction a lie.

THE END.

special
collec.

BW318
.H8J8